LABOUR MONTHLY

A Magazine of Labour Unity
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Editor: R. Palme Dutt

New Worlds for Old	*	R.P.D.
Watch this Washington Visit	*	Quæstor
Not a Penny on the Rent	*	Phil Piratin
Trade that Butler Stops	*	John Eaton
The Real Americans	*	John Williamson
Western Values	*	Sancho Panza
Bloodless	*	William Gallacher

January, 1956

One shilling and sixpence

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WITH ZEST

THE FIRST of January can always be greeted with zest by those who have cause for confidence in the future. So with us here; we can't help feeling that glow as No. One of Volume XXXVIII is set up. In sending good wishes to all for 1956, it seems right to single out just a few who especially deserve thanks from all the rest of us. I am grouping them under the different ways they have found for winning new readers. Pride of place to champion of (1) *Library Reading Rooms.* An *Old Age Pensioner* describes how she wrote to the local Library Secretary suggesting that L.M. be placed in the reading room. Within a few days the Books Sub-committee had approved and next month's issue was available. She adds: 'You can imagine that I am very happy to be able now to read L.M. regularly as before, when I subscribed, but had to give up owing to the small old age pension. Would it not be advisable, through our readers and subscribers, to check *all* public libraries and if it is not there, to suggest it as I did?' Splendid initiative! and what about other libraries? Why not check to see if it is in your Working Men's Institute, now? And (2) *Trades Councils.* In some towns keen readers sell outside the monthly trades council meetings. Thus busy people who sometimes have no time, what with shift work and overtime, to be sure of picking up a copy and can't afford a subscription, can rely on getting it. In a *Midlands city* there is a regular sale of over a dozen copies in this way. In a *Welsh town* where that hadn't been done, a miner has started it, by first handing out back numbers and then booking firm orders. (3) *Trade Union branches.* The same can be done at trade union branch meetings. I know a *building trade worker* who never fails to take his own copy with him, and passes it on, drawing attention to special articles. That is how he wins his new readers. A young *electrician* sells half a dozen on his branch meeting nights. An *engineering shop steward* seized the opportunity of the good impression made when our penny leaflet *The Right to Strike* was circularised to his branch to win readers. (4) *Conferences and Meetings.* A veteran woman reader in a *seaside town* jumped at the chance when a trade union conference was held there, and herself sold 14 copies. At the Margate Labour Party Conference, 130 copies were sold to delegates. If they can see it, they buy it. But if it's not on view?

There's always a way

THEN remember (5) *Newsagents.* Plenty of readers have learnt that once their local newsagent displays a copy, he finds he builds sales. So a *Scottish railwayman* takes the initiative to make sure that his own newsagent has a copy on view; while the *London office worker* who stimulated sales through 16 newsagents (as we described in the September number) keeps up his first-class work. (6) *On the Job.* To all those readers who regularly take L.M. with them down the pit and into the workshop, our greetings and thanks—not forgetting

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Notes of the Month

New Worlds For Old

'In the last analysis, the upshot of the struggle will be determined by the fact that Russia, India, China, etc., account for the overwhelming majority of the population of the globe. And it is precisely this majority that during the past few years has been drawn into the struggle for emancipation with extraordinary rapidity, so that in this respect there cannot be the slightest shadow of doubt what the final outcome of the world struggle will be. In this sense, the complete victory of Socialism is fully and absolutely assured.'

LENIN, Better Fewer, But Better, March, 1923.

ONE-THIRD of a century has passed since Lenin wrote those words. Today we are witnessing an advanced stage in their fulfilment. When Lenin wrote, the Soviet Union had alone won liberation. China was still shackled to Western finance-capital and its warlords. In colonial India Gandhi had just been sentenced to six years imprisonment. Today alongside the Soviet Union stands in close brotherhood the victorious Chinese People's Republic. India has shattered colonial rule for close on a decade.

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And now the tempestuous ovation of the many-millioned masses of India to the visit of the Soviet leaders has opened the eyes of the Western powers to the path along which India is travelling, and to this new portent of the future of India and the world. The petty stonewalling tactics of obstruction at Geneva last autumn fall into due place and proportion before this vision of the new world that is sweeping forward.

A Memorable Year

In the multiple texture and conflicting strands of the past year three events stand out above all as of long-term historical significance. First, the Bandung Conference of the Afro-Asian nations, associating for the first time the official spokesmen of the nations of Asia and Africa, without the participation of imperialism, making their combined voice heard for the first time as the subject, no longer as the object of history, and achieving united decisions, despite all contradictions, for the support of national independence and peaceful co-existence against colonialism and the imperialist war pacts, in the most widely representative conference ever held of the official spokesmen of the majority of mankind. Second, the Geneva Conference of the Heads of State in the summer, which was the sequel and in no small degree the outcome of the Bandung Conference, and which registered the bankruptcy of a decade of the counter-revolutionary policy and strategy of the cold war, and the official recognition by all the powers of the aims of peaceful co-existence. Third, the visit of the Soviet leaders to India and other Asian countries, and the new perspectives opened, not only by the mass enthusiasm of their reception, but equally by the practical and constructive agreements reached for co-operation to end the legacy of dependent colonial economies and safeguard the future for peace.

Golden Numbers

A little arithmetic may here be in place to correct the distorted world picture still blandly assumed in the self-centred chancelleries and press offices of the West. The total population of the world recorded for 1950 was 2,454 millions (2,547 millions for 1953). Of this the population of Asia was 1,320 millions, or more than half the world total. The combined population of Asia and Africa was 1,518 millions or five-eighths of the world total. If we take the three powers to whom Lenin made specific reference, the Soviet

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Union, India and China, the combined population of these three alone is in the neighbourhood of 1,200 millions, or close on half the population of the world. The population of the 14 North Atlantic Treaty states (excluding their colonial empires) is 320 millions, or one-eighth of the world total. Yet the rulers of this minority, so long accustomed to the one-time world domination of imperialism, still imagine they can arrogate to themselves the rôle of the natural divinely ordained leaders, spokesmen and arbiters of destiny of the world—or even (with the culminating touch of irony, in view of their still vast colonial empires) of what they are pleased to call the 'free world'.

Shifting the Balance

The significance of the assessment of numbers is not a question of strength or power. Over the vast regions of Asia and Africa that were either until recently dominated, or still are dominated by imperialism, and in consequence, plundered, retarded and obstructed in their development, the economic and technical level is still low, poverty widespread, and the measure of numbers no measure of present strength in the material scale. The significance is above all that the vast masses of humanity are now in movement; and their experience, their outlook, their hopes and aspirations by no means coincide with the fettered prejudices and calculations of the Western Stock Exchanges or their 'cultured' exponents. Further, the material balance also is now beginning to change. The battle for political liberation is only the first step of the battle for economic and social reconstruction. Already the mighty economic achievement of the socialist world has brought a decisive and accelerating change in the balance of world economy; and it is the leaders of the Western 'superior' civilisation, alike in Britain and in the United States, who have begun to raise a howl about scientific and technological backwardness. And now a stage has been reached when the socialist world is able to come to the aid of the rising nations which still suffer from the crippling inheritance of colonial economy, and to open the way to a new era of advance by fraternal co-operation.

Piercing the Iron Curtain

Through nearly two centuries of domination the British rulers sought to maintain their Iron Curtain around India. Long before there was any thought of the first victory of the socialist revolution they proclaimed their mission to 'defend' India from 'the Russian danger'. As they drove forward on the North-West frontier or

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conducted their three wars against Afghanistan they justified their aggression as essential to forestal the 'menace' of 'the Russians' coming over the mountains. With the victory of the socialist revolution, and with the accompanying upsurge in India, all the military and police and secret police measures were intensified to keep India in the cage. Passports for Indians travelling abroad, when such could be obtained at all, were normally stamped 'Not valid for the U.S.S.R.'. No Soviet citizen had any chance of obtaining a visa for 'British' India. An Indian journalist recalls:

> It was only during the war, in 1943, that some of us in Bombay had our first meeting with a Soviet man—a *Tass* correspondent returning from Australia who was permitted to stay in Bombay only for a few days while waiting for a ship, but was all the time trailed by the C.I.D. (K. A. Abbas in *Blitz*, November 19, 1955.)

Now, with the ending of British rule, the Iron Curtain is down. 'The Russians' have come over the mountains, not with arms, but with friendship; and they have been received with such ovations of mass enthusiasm as no British Governor-General or Viceroy over two centuries, with all their pompous pageants, has ever been privileged to witness even in the most overwhelming mass demonstrations of hatred and anger against their rule.

Superior Sahibs

No wonder the political leaders and publicists of Western imperialism have viewed with ill-concealed fury this vision of the new world that is arising beyond their ken and their control. But their mortification has outstripped their discretion. With the characteristic thick-skinned insensitiveness to the feelings of others which has won the Sahib his reputation throughout Asia, the Anglo-American official and semi-official press has vented its spleen with a malignant barrage of ill-natured comments, patronising superiority and contempt for the 'ignorant Indian masses', such as has aroused the resentment of even the most moderate sections of opinion in India. At first the attempt was made to dismiss the demonstrations as of no significance. The crowds came out because their living quarters were overcrowded and stuffy, opined the sapient *Observer* (the stuffiness apparently did not operate in the days of the Viceroys). 'Many just wanted a bit of fun', was the verdict of the *New York Times* on November 18, and on November 21 the *Manchester Guardian* took comfort in the thought:

> Of course the people of India love a show, and many have come to see the Russian statesmen in the same way as they would flock to see visiting Martians.

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Which would hardly explain the no less overwhelming mass demonstrations for Indo-Soviet friendship in Malabar, where the Soviet leaders never came.

Western Yahoos

But soon the pretence could no longer be maintained. The mask of amused contempt was dropped. By November 26 the *Manchester Guardian* reported alarm at 'the over-enthusiasm of the crowds':

> The unforeseen and unprecedented reception given to the Russians has begun to worry Indians.

Since 'Indians' were worried, the innocent reader might be puzzled to speculate who composed the vast 'unprecedented' and 'over-enthusiastic' crowds. But, of course, these were 'mere natives', as distinct from true Indian Sahibs. By the beginning of December the demonstration of three millions in a single rally in Calcutta ('History's biggest rally: an unprecedented unimaginable multitude, constituting a record in human history', as an Indian journal described it) aroused the *Manchester Guardian* reporter on December 3 to bitter reflections on the possibility of the advance of Communism in India:

> The Himalayan reception that they got in Calcutta is bound to swell the number of Communist students; 25 per cent. of them are already Communists and perhaps another 25 per cent. Congress. The other half are balanced on the razor's edge between fellow-travelling and communism. These will be won over, for they belong to that huge cesspool of under-educated unemployed who blame the system but never themselves for their failure.

'Huge cesspool of under-educated unemployed.' Such is the cultured attitude to students and graduates of the 'liberal' 'civilised' *Manchester Guardian*. We may be thankful to the moment of ill-temper for revealing the true face of the barbarian beneath the veneer of the 'liberal' philistine.

The 'Gift of Freedom' Myth

Alternatively the Labour imperialist press sought to take comfort in the familiar practice of blowing a loud blast on the trumpet of self-praise, and found its appropriate method of offending Indian national sentiment by endeavouring to resuscitate the hoary myth that the British Labour Government 'gave' freedom to India in 'the greatest voluntary act of abdication', etc.

> India is free today through the greatest voluntary act of abdication by a colonial power in the history of statesmanship. . . . The greatest 'fighter

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against colonialism' in all history was the British people's government that restored freedom to 480 million people because it was RIGHT and JUST to do so.

(*Reynolds News*, December 4, 1955.)

This kind of claim is on a par with the Tory claim that Toryism 'gave' the British working class the right to form trade unions, to vote or to have the legal right to freedom of the press, or factory protection or the social services. The hard won fruits of prolonged and bitter struggle are turned by the wand of the propagandist into the magnanimity of the oppressor. The myth may still have a certain currency in Britain where the hard facts have been kept back from general knowledge. But even in Britain the most casual observer can scarcely have failed to notice that 'the greatest fighter against colonialism in all history' conducted the most savage colonial war in all history against the Malayan people. The inability of the weakened British imperialism after the Second World War to maintain power over the 400 millions of India in revolt turned into a very different tune when it was a question of the six millions of Malaya. Can it be that what is 'RIGHT' and 'JUST' turns on the size of the opponent?

How the Indian People Ended Colonial Rule

'Independence does not come as a gift', Stalin wrote in 1925. The Indian people know that well from the experience of a century of their national liberation struggle against imperialism, including against Labour imperialism, which used every weapon in the arsenal of repression to crush their revolt before it was compelled to surrender. They have not forgotten that it was the second Labour Government, including Mr. Attlee, which jailed 60,000 Indian patriots for the crime of demanding national freedom. Only when the mass upsurge after the Second World War swept beyond the capacity of the machinery of repression; when the upsurge extended to the Indian armed forces, the basis of British rule; when the Indian Navy rose in revolt, tore down the Union Jack and ran up the flags of the Congress, the Moslem League and the Red Flag; when the people of Bombay came out on the streets in solidarity with the Naval Revolt against the threat of the British Commander in Chief to shell the Indian Navy to destruction, and 400 were shot dead in the streets of Bombay alone within three days by the British military forces: only then, in face of this threatening collapse of the whole basis of its rule, British imperialism, through the agency of the Labour Government, hastened to recognise the inevitable conclusion and to negotiate with the upper class leaders of the national move-

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ment in order to reach the most favourable settlement possible, lest worse should befall. It was on February 18, 1946, that the Indian Naval Revolt began. It was on February 19 that Mr. Attlee announced in Parliament the decision to send the Cabinet Mission to negotiate the transfer of power in India. As Sir Stafford Cripps explained in Parliament on March 5, 1947, the only alternative to such a transfer was to endeavour to maintain British power in India by 'a considerable reinforcement of troops', and this alternative was 'not possible', since the additional troops were not available. It was 'obviously impossible', declared Sir Stafford, to endeavour to prolong the British domination of India 'when we had not the power to carry it out'. A remarkable 'voluntary abdication'.

History Does Not Stand Still

Undoubtedly the British imperialists hoped by their negotiation with the upper class leadership of the national movement to forestal the mass revolution which both sides feared, and thereby, on the basis of this measure of common ground, to extract the best possible terms for themselves, and, even while transferring political power, to maintain their economic and strategic hold and a considerable measure of indirect influence. For, in fact, the Indian mass upsurge which won freedom, the Naval Revolt and the Bombay rising, was not conducted under the Congress High Command, but against its ban and disapproval. The freedom of India was won, neither by the 'gift' of the British Labour Government, nor by the Indian upper class, but by the same many-millioned masses of India who have today given such a tumultuous welcome to the Soviet leaders. Thus the settlement of 1947 could only be transitional. British colonial rule was ended; and by 1950 the sovereign Indian Republic was established, only recognising the British Crown as the 'Head of the Commonwealth'. But the price of the compromise settlement was heavy: the partition of India; the continued grip of British finance-capital on the resources and labour of the Indian people; the maintenance of the reactionary landlord and monopolist social structure which had been closely linked with imperialism. Nevertheless, the history of the past decade has shown that the advance of India could not be checked by all the ingenious devices and reactionary features of the 1947 settlement. The calculations of the Mountbattens and Attlees had hoped to hold India as still a close associate of British imperialism. But the development has begun to move otherwise.

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Free India Advances

The outstanding feature of Indian development in the past decade, and one of the most important new features of the world situation, has been the increasingly important rôle which India under Premier Nehru has been fulfilling in the cause of peace. In the first initial phase after 1947 the links with the camp of Anglo-American imperialism still remained close; the economic, trading, political and military ties with Britain were (and still are) considerable; India, like Pakistan, Ceylon and Burma, continued to be a very profitable base of exploitation by British capital; strategic control, dispositions and training continued to be very closely integrated with the British military authorities. But the victory of the Chinese Revolution by the end of 1949 brought a decisive change in the balance of forces in Asia, and the beginning of a new orientation for India. The vote of the Indian representative in the United Nations in June, 1950, for endorsing the American aggression in Korea was the last act of close association with the main strategy of the imperialist camp. Immediately after, in July, 1950, followed the correspondence between Nehru and Stalin for peace in Korea. India took the lead in striving for and helping to implement the cease-fire in Korea; in organising the association of the five Colombo powers for peace in Vietnam and opposing the American plans for combined imperialist intervention; and in taking the initiative with Indonesia for the convening of the Afro-Asian Conference at Bandung.

A New Factor in World Politics

In the United Nations the development of the so-called Afro-Asian grouping of states favouring policies of neutrality and dissociation from the imperialist war plans became a new factor in international politics. The U.S.-Pakistan Military Treaty, arousing justified anger in India at this military intervention in the Indian peninsula, reinforced the progressive orientation of Indian policy. India has openly denounced the aggressive war blocs of imperialism, the North Atlantic Treaty, the South-East Asia Treaty and the Baghdad Pact. The exchange of visits between Premier Nehru and Premier Chou En-lai, the visit of Nehru to the Soviet Union, and now the visit of the Soviet leaders to India, and the enthusiastic mass receptions in all three countries have further demonstrated the strengthening of the links of international co-operation in the cause of peace, national independence and the ending of colonialism, the banning of nuclear weapons and the reduction of armaments, and economic co-operation to end the heritage of colonial dependence.

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Problems of Indian Economy

Nor was this advance confined to the field of foreign policy. It is true that a disastrous and deteriorating economic situation was inherited by India. Between 1931-32 and 1948-49 the national income per head, at constant prices, had fallen from 83 to 70 rupees, or 16 per cent., according to the United Nations 'Economic Survey of Asia and the Far East', published in 1950. The conditions of the transfer of power had not yet opened the way for the decisive social and class changes necessary, especially for the liquidation of landlordism. Nevertheless, the First Five Year Plan, launched in 1951, although still adapted to an essentially colonial economy, achieved some beginnings of economic advance. Between 1951 and 1954 industrial output increased by 37 per cent., and agricultural output by 15 per cent. Food grains production rose by 11 million tons (partly due to favourable weather conditions). Food consumption per head was officially reported to have risen from 1,398 calories in 1950-51 to 1,623 calories in 1953-54.

India's Second Five Year Plan

The Second Five Year Plan, whose initial draft outline has been published, and in the preparation of which the assistance of international economists, including Soviet economists, has been utilised by the Planning Commission, envisages a new advance to begin to attack the basis of colonial economy and extend industrialisation and the rôle of the public sector. The draft outline proposes net new investment of £4,200 million, of which £2,550 million, or 61 per cent. is to be in the public sector, and 26 per cent. (as against only 8 per cent. in the First Five Year Plan) for industrial development, with the main emphasis on iron and steel and heavy industry. The aim is set for an increase in the national income by 25 per cent. in five years. The obstacles are heavy. Sharp criticism has been expressed from imperialist monopoly quarters, as well as from reactionary monopoly interests in India linked to imperialism. But the unity of the democratic forces in India can ensure a progressive internal development in India to correspond to the progressive development in international orientation.

Soviet Economic Co-operation

It is in this situation and in relation to these problems that the new possibilities and prospects opened up by economic co-operation with the Soviet Union as well as with the People's Democracies,

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take on such importance for India, Burma and all the Asian countries struggling against the inheritance of colonial economy, to assist in opening the way to a new path and the overcoming of colonial economy. This was already demonstrated in the Indian-Soviet agreement, signed in February, 1955, for the establishment, with Soviet aid and technical equipment, of a steel works, representing a capital of £33 million, to produce one million tons of steel. In vain the Western imperialists seek to boast of the volume of their 'aid' and investments in Asia. For bitter experience has shown that such 'aid' is directed, not to ending economic dependence, but to maintaining and even extending economic and also strategic dependence.

Without Strings

All the volume of Western private capital investment in Asia has been directed to extracting the maximum profit from the plunder of the resources of these countries, while leaving their economy underdeveloped. The public 'aid' has been openly directed to strategic aims. Hence the favourable reception of Indian opinion to the Soviet offers has found reflection, not only in the general press, but also in the comment of such a leading Indian financial organ as *Commerce* of Bombay (connected with the Tata interests) on November 26:

> One reason why their offer has impressed many in this country is the absence of any strings to it. . . . These observations (of the Soviet leaders) are in refreshing contrast to some of the harsh and hostile pronouncements made by a few American Congressmen and a section of the American press whenever the question of U.S. economic aid to India cropped up.

Soviet oil experts have arrived in Delhi, not to prospect for concessions, but to aid India to open up its oil resources. Similarly the Soviet-Burmese economic agreement provides, not only for the establishment of industrial plants and agricultural and irrigation development, but also for the gift to construct and equip a technological institute.

Economic Aid versus Military Domination

And now also for the Middle Eastern countries a new future begins to come into view through the offers of economic aid from the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies. Once again the Western powers hasten to confer together to discuss what counter-plans they can offer in the hope to outbid the Soviet proposals for aid for economic development. Such is the stimulating logic of

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competition of peaceful co-existence. But the rueful comment of the *Economist* on November 19 (with special reference to Eden's speech suggesting the possibility of giving a little more consideration to the just claims of the Arab nations in respect of the territories plundered from the Arabs in Palestine) applies in a wider context:

> In many Arab eyes this amounts to an admission that they have but to glance towards Moscow, and Western titbits follow.

Nor can the Middle Eastern peoples forget that every Western plan is bound up with openly proclaimed strategic aims to draw them into a military net. As *The Times* on March 3, 1952, bitingly remarked on the reality behind the American 'Mutual Security Aid':

> The programme will, as last year, be artificially divided into military and economic. . . . What is called economic aid is merely a cheaper form of military assistance.

Behind all the talk of Western plans to give economic aid to the Middle Eastern countries (as demonstrated in the British subsidies to the British-officered 'Arab Legion' and to maintain the reactionary dictatorship in Iraq) the reality is the Baghdad Military Pact.

A Contrast of Two Missions

It is impossible not to contrast the two Missions, one from the camp of Western imperialism and one from the socialist world, which visited Asia at the same moment in November of last year. To Delhi, on November 18, from the socialist world came Bulganin and Khrushchov, to be received with the unprecedented mass enthusiasm of the entire people, and bringing with them messages of brotherhood and offers of co-operation for peace and economic progress. To Baghdad, on November 21, came the characteristic representatives of imperialist 'democracy'—Macmillan and General Templer. For them there were no crowds of welcome, no enthusiasm of the people. All the draconian security measures to hold down the Iraqi people were intensified. They came, not for peace, but to clamp down the rivets of the Baghdad Military Pact on the backs of the unwilling Middle Eastern peoples.

Who Speaks for the People?

Khrushchov could speak to audiences of millions, in simple burning words that went to the hearts of his hearers, from direct experience of the common struggle of the oppressed against colonial oppression:

> They say they were sitting in their colonies bringing their civilisation to the backward peoples. But we say differently. We say they were sitting

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in their colonies to rob the people of their last piece of bread, people who were toiling to get it. That is what they do not like.

The truth is against them. I can say these things because I am a representative of the toiling classes. I am one of the toiling classes.

The Soviet people are glad you have overthrown colonial oppression and are ready to do everything in their power to help you so that the colonialists cannot come back to live off your labour.

Only those people who are toiling for the same goal and were oppressed themselves could wish you that. I am one of you because I used to work for the French who owned the mines where I worked. I worked for the English and I worked for the Germans. I know what it means to work for someone else.

Harold Macmillan had he been visited for a moment with the same gift of personal truth, could have said to the starving Iraqis:

I know what it is to live on the labour of others. All my life I have never known poverty or labour. I come from the most exclusive aristocratic circles of Britain. My wife is the daughter of a duke. My clubs are the Carlton and the Turf. Colonial profits make my class rich. I call you to defend them against any who would menace them.

General Templer might have said:

I come to you from commanding the Colonial war in Malaya, from bombing and razing to the ground villages that dare to resist our rule. You in Iraq know also what it is to be bombed by us from the air to teach you obedience. I am the faithful executor of the military orders of those who maintain colonial profits against the liberation struggles of the colonial peoples.

Perhaps they were wiser to refrain, and to remain behind their guarded doors in secret conference with their puppets. Such are the characteristic representatives of Western imperialist 'democracy' to Asia. Is it surprising that the masses of Asia spit them out with loathing and contempt, and take to their hearts, with love and enthusiasm, the representatives of Soviet democracy, of national and social liberation?

Mene, Mene, Tekel Upharsin

Is it surprising that even *The Times* is compelled to face the unwelcome conclusion in its editorial on 'The New Asia' on December 5?

The West will fail to understand Asia if it thinks Asia's attitude to Communism can be equated with its own. . . . Communism proclaims itself the liberator of the common man from want and indignity. There are many common men in Asia suffering from both. It proclaims the brotherhood of man, and that is echoed most warmly in Asia. It proclaims equality which Asia most assiduously demands. Its message is all-embracing, and for those who feel the old traditions sundered and the legacies of imperialism, valued and respected though they may be, in-

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sufficient to pilot them in the modern world, Communism appears to offer a key. Asia takes the broad view because it can take no other. . . .

Without a developed, stable and responsible capitalist class in Asia the public sector—to borrow the Indian term—meets with no serious conflict. In India, as in China, a 'socialist pattern' flying a nationalist flag wins the day. Nor does the Communist threat to European cultural values seem so great to those civilisations of the Eurasian landmass that see their disintegration as a product of European aggression.

The only hope for the future that the melancholy editorialist of *The Times* can see is the emergence of a 'developed, stable and responsible capitalist class' in Asia. 'Belike, but there are likelier things' that may happen first—are happening already—in the vast regions of Asia, the home of the majority of mankind, the cradle of ancient and majestic civilisations, and now rich with the portent of new life.

Into the Future

In the famous last prediction of Lenin quoted at the outset of these Notes, when he spoke of the decisive rôle of Russia, India and China and kindred countries, constituting the overwhelming majority of mankind, in relation to the future of the world and the prospects of the victory of world socialism, the preceding argument which led to this prediction is often overlooked. He was answering the question whether the then weak Soviet Union could hope to survive in view of the delay of the socialist revolution in Western Europe. He answered with a reply which swept forward the vision of the future of socialism in the world beyond the narrow confines of the imperialist-infected centres of the capitalist countries of Western Europe to a larger horizon:

Shall we be able to hold on . . . while the West-European capitalist countries are consummating their development to socialism? But they are consummating it not as we formerly expected. They are not consummating it by the gradual 'maturing' of socialism, but by the exploitation of some countries by others, by the exploitation of the first of the countries to be vanquished in the imperialist war, combined with the exploitation of the whole of the East. On the other hand, precisely as a result of the first imperialist war, the East has been definitely drawn into the revolutionary movement, has been definitely drawn into the general maelstrom of the world revolutionary movement.

This was the last article that Lenin wrote. With piercing gaze he looked into the future. We are living in that future.

December 12, 1955. R.P.D.

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WATCH THIS WASHINGTON VISIT

QUÆSTOR

THE visit of Sir Anthony Eden and Mr. Macmillan to Washington, at the end of this month, requires the instant and vigilant attention of all sections of the Labour movement. All the official explanations of their journey given when it was announced on December 6 connect it with the failure of the Geneva Conference of Foreign Ministers (October 27-November 16) to reach any positive decisions. But it would be a profound mistake to see the Washington visit only against the background of that particular conference.

Every step forward in the advance to a more peaceful world in the last two years—since the British and American Governments, at their Bermuda meeting in December, 1953, at last gave way to the combined effect of popular demand, the diplomatic initiative of the U.S.S.R. and the Soviet hydrogen bomb explosion (August, 1953), and reluctantly agreed to a Four-Power meeting at Berlin the following February—has been met with a counter-offensive by the forces of darkness.

This was why the first Geneva conference, in the summer of 1954, which ended war in Indo-China, was followed by the South-East Asia Treaty and the forcing through of the Paris Treaties, which increased the danger of general war in the Far East and in Europe. It is why the second Geneva conference (the 'summit meeting') in July, 1955, which finally proved to the world that peace between the Great Powers and the reduction of their armaments is a practical possibility, and led to diplomatic relations between the Soviet Union and West Germany, was followed by the violent chorus of American and British warlords, repudiating any possibility of cutting armaments. This was obviously authorised by their Governments, who then ostentatiously held their preliminary meeting to work out their hard-and-fast demands for the third Geneva conference (the Foreign Ministers). That conference, therefore, was stultified beforehand. All it could do was to draw 'the attention of the broad public to the most urgent problems of our time—and this cannot but have a positive effect' (Molotov's closing speech on November 16).

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The rapid call to Washington can only be intended to make the temporary success of the wreckers into a jumping-off point for further developing their counter-offensive, taking advantage of the political lull at Christmas and the New Year. They would like to weaken still further the 'dangerous' optimism of their peoples about the chances of peace. The problem for the broad public, on the other hand—and that implies in particular British Labour, potentially the most powerful organisation of the people in any West European or American country—is to prevent the warmongers from consolidating their temporary success. The problem is to consider afresh these 'most urgent problems of our time' in which all the hopes and lives of hundreds of millions are at stake.

First let us set down for the record—and the campaign—precisely what the Western Ministers rejected at Geneva. It is not necessary to take even the initial Soviet proposals in this respect: it will be sufficient to list the series of final, third-line compromise offers made by the Soviet Foreign Minister on November 15 and 16, to see the great opportunity of relieving international tension and increasing confidence which was presented, with the consequent possibility of making immediate cuts in armaments:

1. A four-Power declaration in favour of a provisional treaty between the N.A.T.O. and Warsaw Powers, providing for (i) non-use of force against one another, except in individual or collective self-defence; (ii) consultation in the event of disputes arising which would threaten peace in Europe.

2. A four-Power declaration (i) that they are determined to continue the search for an agreement on 'a vast programme of disarmament'; (ii) that they were closer together on certain important questions relative to reduction of armaments and prohibition of atomic weapons, including the need for effective inspection (the Anglo-French proposals of June, 1954, and April, 1955, were meant here); (iii) that they would continue their efforts to eliminate differences still existing; (iv) that in the first place they would study the Soviet proposals of May last (which Eden had welcomed as an 'important step forward'), Eisenhower's scheme of American-Soviet mutual air inspection and exchange of military information, Eden's plan for a zone of reduced armaments, under joint inspection, in Europe, and the French plan for cutting arms budgets.

3. A four-Power declaration of agreement on points for a general Security Treaty: (*a*) renunciation of the use of force; (*b*) joint action to resist aggression in Europe; (*c*) no assistance to aggressors; (*d*) a

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zone of limited armaments in Europe, under suitable control; (*e*) consultation with Powers involved in a European Security Treaty on their obligations; (*f*) the right of individual and collective self-defence.

4. A proposal for reduction of armed forces in Germany—foreign troops by 50 per cent., German forces in the two Republics by agreement.

5. A four-Power declaration recommending their governments to reduce restrictions on trade and communications, and to promote the exchange of broadcasts, books, papers, magazines and films, and favouring further steps to increase exchanges and visits of a cultural, scientific, technical and economic nature—including exchanging students and professors and sportsmen, and the development of both individual and collective tourism.

What would have been the cumulative effect of such a series of decisions? It would have completely altered the whole atmosphere in Europe, in favour of mutual confidence and co-operation. It would have accelerated the process of reaching practical agreement on questions still awaiting solution—such, incidentally, as Molotov's proposal at Geneva that all four Powers should solemnly declare that they would not be the first to use atomic or nuclear weapons: and that, as the first step in applying the programme of arms reductions by the Great Powers, they should agree to renounce A-bomb and H-bomb tests.

But these offers were rejected, as earlier more far-reaching proposals had been.

Why were they rejected? On that all more or less independent commentators—British, French, American—are agreed: it was to impress the people of West Germany with the anti-Soviet spirit of their allies—or, in the words of one cynic, 'to protect Adenauer from slipping any further'. This was what was implied in the remark of the *Manchester Guardian* diplomatic correspondent at Geneva (November 15) that 'this conference has largely been an exercise in propaganda directed towards the people of Germany': and of his colleague of *The Times* (November 17) that its outcome 'probably reflects closely the wishes of Dr. Adenauer'. For the sake of bolstering up the prestige of Adenauer (spokesman of the policy of an armed anti-Soviet bloc with West Germany as its spearhead) the three Western Ministers were prepared from the first to throw away all chances of agreement at Geneva on European security.

Ah, but that would be 'an illusion of security', Macmillan said in the House of Commons on December 7: 'There can be no

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genuine security in Europe so long as Germany remains divided'. This was a bit of slippery sophistry of which the reader can find many examples in the Foreign Secretary's speeches. What is 'genuine'? Of course *in the long run* European security requires, among other things, the unification of Germany. Molotov not only endorsed this, but proposed to take practical steps to bring this about—by bringing West and East Germans into working contact.

But security means, first and foremost, certainty of not being attacked. Is anyone in Europe in danger *today* of being attacked by a divided Germany? Of course not: it is those who are putting arms into the hands of a remilitarised West Germany, under Hitler's ex-generals, who are creating such a danger—particularly as they are being backed by the anti-Soviet alliance called N.A.T.O. Security in Europe would take a big step forward if the two great blocs signed a temporary security pact, just because on this basis greater confidence and some measures of disarmament would become possible—and within that framework the reunion of Germany, *outside* all blocs and with defensive armament only. As Alfred Robens himself said in Parliament on July 27, within such a temporary pact 'arrangements could be made which would enable German unity to follow'.

The West Germans at Geneva, both journalists and numerous political representatives—from the right wing 'Refugees Party' to the Social Democratic leader Ollenhauer—understood this very well. They showed no enthusiasm at all for their Republic's membership of N.A.T.O. They admitted that—just as the U.S.S.R. had repeatedly warned everybody—it had become the principal barrier to German unity. And since Geneva signs have been increasing that the average West German realises how he has been made a tool of by the United States and British Governments. Dr. Dehler, leader of the Free Democrat party—a section of Adenauer's coalition—has publicly criticised Adenauer's failure to approach the U.S.S.R. during the Geneva meeting, and has demanded a modification of the Paris agreements (November 21). A series of German papers—while loyally continuing to blame the Russians—have begun to ask whether the Western Powers are 'wholly blameless' for failing to get an advance towards German unity (*The Times*, November 21). The Social Democrats renewed, in a Parliamentary debate on December 2, their demand that a united Germany must be expressly excluded from N.A.T.O. in advance, and that it should form part of an agreed all-European security system. And although Adenauer secured his formal majority in Parliament, it is well known

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that this no longer reflects a majority of the voters—among whom, as the *Economist* sadly records (December 3), the impression is 'that Dr. Adenauer and his foreign minister have in some way failed to do enough for reunion'.

Even as Macmillan was giving his shuffling answer in the House, a reminder came of where the real menace to European security arises. It became known that the West German Government was asking for bigger warships, and more warships, than were originally agreed by N.A.T.O. Give the militarists an inch and they take an ell. Sure enough, after several days of soothing assurances, *The Times* admitted (December 10) 'that France and the other W.E.U. (Western European Union) countries have in fact agreed that Germany may now be allowed to build a slightly larger navy than originally stipulated'.

So it will go on—unless the British Labour movement returns to the struggle, protesting against German rearmament, demanding a European Security Treaty without delay, and thus encouraging the Social Democrats and the other opposition groups in West Germany.

The other main topic at Washington, we are told, is to be the issues arising from Soviet policy in Asia, particularly the visit of Bulganin and Khrushchov to India, Burma and Afghanistan—with what *The Times* calls (December 6) 'its challenge and its warning to the West'. There is 'concern' over the offers of technical and economic aid to countries in the Middle and Far East, says the *Telegraph* (December 8). There is an 'economic threat from Russia' says a *Manchester Guardian* headline, the same day: she 'intends to promote a programme of her own for aiding the under-developed countries'. There is a 'diplomatic and economic battle in that part of the world', says the *Daily Herald* (December 7)—and that is what 'makes the Prime Minister's projected visit to President Eisenhower so necessary'. Complete—and shameful—unanimity!

At some other time it would be comic to record the fury of the capitalist press at the enthusiastic welcome given to the Soviet leaders in the Asiatic countries. 'How dare they? Haven't we offered to abolish nuclear weapons? Didn't we wipe out illiteracy in India, and by economic and social development reduce the death-rate among Indian babies to the level of the most advanced countries in Europe? Haven't we left Burma a flourishing industry, able to supply her population with all it needs? Didn't we make our stay in these countries as peaceful as life in Bournemouth, as unmarked

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by shootings, hangings and police charges as elections to a Gloucestershire parish council?' That is what the British press seems to have been saying.

And the retort of the Asiatic peoples has been a rude one. 'No, you didn't.' It is in the Soviet Union—its Central Asian, Trans-Caucasus and smaller Republics—that former colonial peoples have raised their standards of life and education out of all knowledge, not the British Empire. Indian Conservative politicians and journalists have seen this with their own eyes. It is in Malaya and Kenya that patriots are dubbed 'terrorists' and villages are burned as the Black-and-Tans used to burn them in Ireland: it is in Cyprus that the methods of colonial warfare are now being used against a nation with far older culture than the British. It was Russia who 'definitely and repeatedly asked for an agreement on the earliest date for international prohibition of nuclear weapons', and the Western Powers who rejected it, said Rajagopalachari, the last Governor-General of India, at Delhi University on November 26. The Baghdad Pact promoted by the British and American Governments (to threaten the U.S.S.R. on its southern border) 'is deplorable from the point of view of peace and security', stated Prime Minister Nehru on December 5. Dulles' support for Portugal's grip on its Goa colony in India will lead the latter to 'feel more and more that the West is first and foremost colonially-minded', admits a grotesquely anti-Soviet *Manchester Guardian* correspondent in Bombay (December 7).

As for the Middle East, 'the Soviet Union has neither created nor intensified military tension, and disturbed conditions there are the making of the Western Powers', said the chief Syrian delegate at the Political Committee of U.N.O. (*Manchester Guardian*, December 8). The U.S.S.R. has not 'affronted one single citizen there. It is not the Soviet Union which is suppressing the liberation movement in North Africa. It is not the Soviet Union which has created this great tragedy of the Palestine question. It is not the Soviet Union which is bombarding the southern territories of Yemen. It is not the Soviet Union which has raided the Buraimi territory of Saudi Arabia. All this is the record of the Western Powers in the Middle East'.

What conclusion should socialists draw from this and much other evidence of what Asiatic peoples are thinking? Can one doubt that it should be to demand that Eden and Eisenhower drop trying to bully the U.S.S.R. and the Asiatic countries? Dissolve the Baghdad Pact: invite the Soviet Union to discuss economic

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aid, without political or military strings, to the countries of Asia: open peace negotiations in Malaya and Kenya: recognise the right of self-determination for Cyprus and North Africa: give People's China her rightful place in the United Nations—every one of these steps, singly and collectively, would open a new page of peace in the world, and every one would add to the prospects of prosperity for the British people.

One of the worst features of the Foreign Ministers' conference was that in practice it was a meeting of Two, not Four. Dulles gave the orders on the Western side, and Macmillan, like Pinay, was but little Sir Echo. But this should not be put down to his own pompous futility, already widely recognised in Parliament, nor yet to his own 'energetic anti-Sovietism' (the expression of a French Conservative correspondent): it was the policy laid down by Downing Street. History shows that, whenever this has happened before—as at the beginning of the Korean War—the result has invariably been one of shame and disaster for the world; whereas when the British Government stood its ground—as when the United States was threatening to use the atom bomb in 1951, or during the Geneva conference on Indo-China in 1954—the result has been beneficial to the world.

Yet, in the face of this experience, the Labour Party leaders kept complete silence during the conference, just as at Margate they opposed the demand for a European security pact as 'pre-judging Geneva'. Although hundreds of resolutions have come from local Labour Parties to Annual Conference in recent years, demanding a Socialist foreign policy, Transport House preferred to leave it to the Tories: and there is plenty of evidence from the *Daily Herald,* at the time of writing, that this is to be the policy for the Washington meeting too.

How long sincere socialists can continue to reconcile their absence from the Communist Party's ranks, in such a situation, remains to be seen. Dozens of active Labour Party people have already made their choice, in recent weeks, for the only party which consistently fights for a working class policy in foreign affairs. But whatever individuals do, trade unions and local Labour Party organisations, at the very least, owe it to the cause of peace to make their voice heard, in the demand that the British Government break loose, in European and world affairs, from the American policy which is crippling British production—and trade, wasting her most skilled labour and continuing to imperil the chances of peaceful co-existence.

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NOT A PENNY ON THE RENT

PHIL PIRATIN

THE movement against increased rents now gathering in volume and taking on new forms of struggle, can become an important factor in changing the political situation in Britain. Since rents first began to be raised, some seven years ago, on the plea of higher costs of maintenance and repairs, through all the stages up to the differential rents schemes (dealt with by T. Balmer in the September issue of *Labour Monthly*), the attack has been pushed forward, first on one section then on another, until two months ago. But when, on October 27, Mr. Sandys, the Minister of Housing and Local Government, exposed his hand by announcing simultaneously with the reduction of subsidies,* an intended review of rents control, it became clear that the Tories are making a general attack both on the three million Council tenants and on the 7½ million private tenants. In their haste to carry out their policy the Tories are creating the possibility of a nation-wide movement of unprecedented proportions, not only against increased rents, but against the Tory Government itself.

First come the factories. Not since 1915, when the Clydeside workers stopped work in support of the struggle against the landlords, have the factory workers begun to take such widespread direct action to keep rents down. The outstanding example of worker and tenant unity has been at Crawley in Sussex, where on October 26, 1955, the workers in the factories stopped work to demonstrate with the tenants of Crawley New Town against rent increases: this solidarity has won wider support from other sections of the movement and strengthened the will of the tenants to resist.

At Ilford in Essex where a differential rents scheme has been imposed on 3,000 tenants, the backbone of the prolonged resistance has been the support of the workers in the factories of Fords, Briggs, Plesseys and others; the opposition of the Labour minority group on the Council has thus been strengthened, and slanders about their association with communists in the Tenants' Association have been well dealt with.

In Wales one small District Council was forced to withdraw its differential rents scheme by the protests of the men in three pits in the area. Many factories are conducting their own campaigns against rent increases and giving support to Trades Councils. In

*For details, reference should be made to *The Housing Cuts Explained*, issued by L.R.D. (Publications), Ltd., 16 pp., 6d.

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Sheffield, a number of large factories, led by the English Steel Corporation, have set up a joint committee to fight rent increases.

The Trades Councils are, in many towns, acting as the apex of the united campaign. In Hastings in Sussex the Trades Council with the support of the Labour Party, Communist Party, Co-operative Party and Tenants organised a protest demonstration. In the London boroughs of Holborn and St. Pancras a United Workers' and Tenants' Defence Committee has been set up backed by the Trades Council, Labour Party, Co-operative Party, Communist Party, Tenants' Association and a number of Labour Councillors. In Birmingham, Leeds and many other towns the Trades Councils have called meetings, produced leaflets and helped in bringing pressure on the local authorities to refrain from increasing the rents.

Many local Labour Parties are supporting the tenants' actions (as in Crawley); are themselves taking the initiative of opposing rent increases (as in Mottingham, Kent, where the Labour Party organised a 200-strong lobby to the Council); and are directing their propaganda against the Government, initiating their own local campaigns in the absence of a lead from their National Executive. Labour Councillors are beginning to direct their fire against the Government. Many have expressed their refusal to do the Government's dirty work. However, these are yet the exceptions.

A number of local authorities have stopped their housing programmes. This is a serious mistake, and is precisely what the Tories want to achieve. Others are uncertain of their next steps: and there are sharp divisions within many a Labour Council group on the question of raising rents. The pressure from the tenants, trade unions and factories is to keep rents down; acceptance of the Tory measures forces rents up. To this dilemma, the answer is being given by a number of local authorities, such as Hull, which called a Town's Meeting, with spokesmen from political parties, trades council, etc. This was attended by 500 people who passed a resolution against the Government's rents policy. Many Councils have passed such resolutions. Joint gatherings, such as the Works Committee of the Metropolitan Boroughs Standing Joint Committee (representing the London Boroughs), and the North-Eastern Regional Committee of the National Housing and Town Planning Council, have voiced their protests.

The local authorities are not only faced with the housing and rents dilemma but with the future of their programmes and the carrying out of their responsibilities. For the Government's decision to force them to borrow money for capital expenditure on the

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market is received with apprehension by every honest councillor, including many Tories. Glasgow's failure to launch a loan of £5 million is a warning to every local authority. The local authorities are facing a situation where their effectiveness will depend on their ability to stand up to and resist the Government's measures.

Tenants' Associations are more in number and more active than at any time in recent years. Tenants, without previous experience of organisation, turn quickly to join committees to defend their interests. Their achievement and success depend on the lead they get and on their links with the trade union movement and industrial workers. The National Association of Tenants and Residents has provided consistent explanation and guidance to those tenants' committees affiliated to it and to other organisations through its monthly journal. The attitude of tenants' organisations towards winning the support of the trade union movement depends much on the background of the tenants. But there is growing recognition of the need to win this support in order to muster full strength in the campaign.

Meanwhile, the tenants' movement grows. In Cardiff, 1,500 tenants assembled in the Cory Hall to oppose the differential rents scheme. Marches, petitions, Council deputations and other forms of protest are taking place in many towns. New moves to co-ordinate sections with common problems are taking place. With the assistance of the N.A.T.R., a National Federation of New Town Tenants' Associations is being set up. Likewise the 170,000 London County Council tenants, scattered throughout the Home Counties, are forming a central organisation. This co-ordination of sections of the tenants' movement points the way to a nationwide co-ordinated movement.

From these few examples, it can be seen that we are on the threshold of a national movement in which every section of the people and every popular organisation can unite against the Government. The tenants are no longer fighting alone. The industrial workers and the trade union and labour movement is with them. The tenants need no longer be divided—Council tenant v. private tenant. Their defence against Tory piecemeal attacks is to unite. The local authorities, especially those which are Labour-controlled, need no longer regard themselves as required to act as the Government's stooges and attack their tenants. They can win tenants and ratepayers for a line of opposition to the Government.

The Communist Party is playing a leading part in many towns in trying to achieve this united movement. It regards its main rôle

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Indian Fishermen . . . . by Harry Baines

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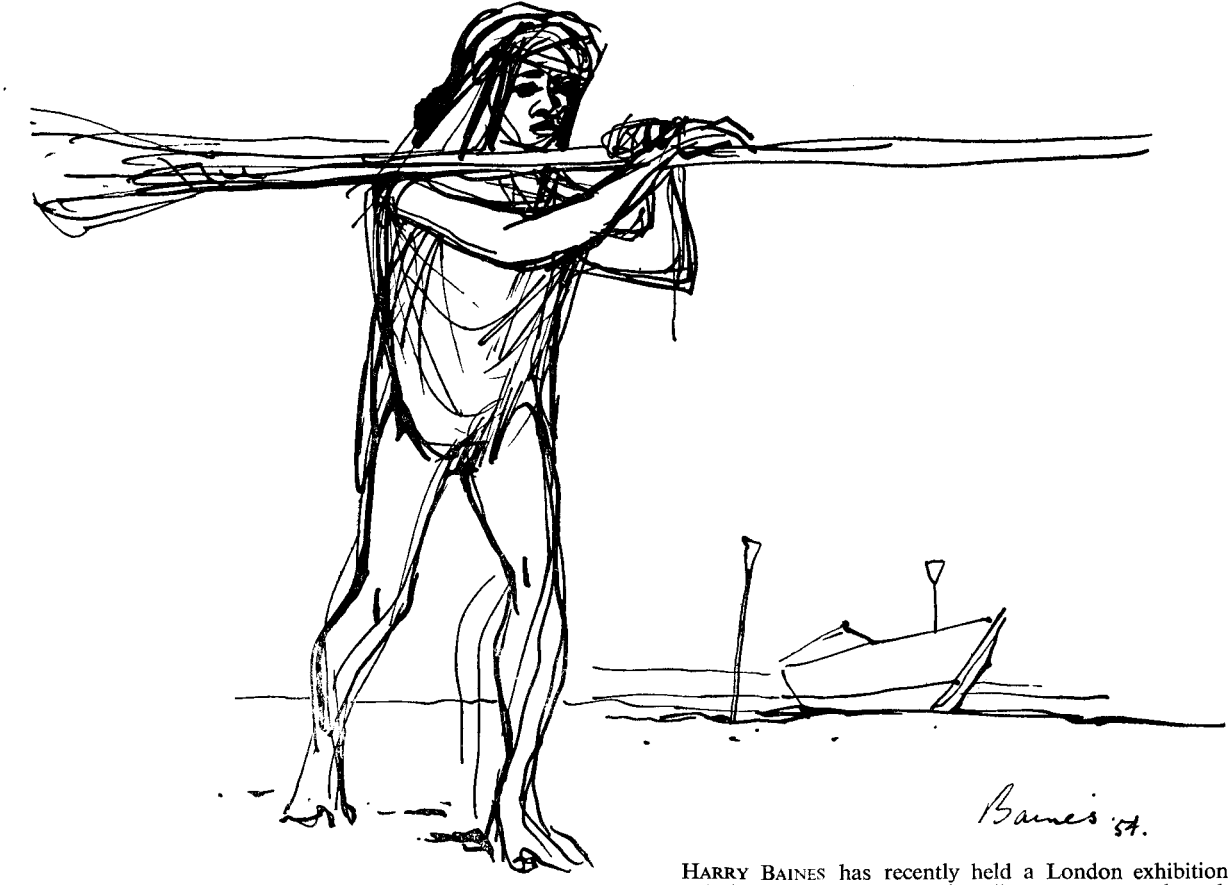

HARRY BAINES has recently held a London exhibition of paintings and drawings of Indian peasants and working people following his visit to India in 1954.

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to clarify the issues and help to determine a clear-cut policy; and to unify the forces of the movement. Communist members are able to play this part because of their connection with many sections of the movement and their common purpose to improve the working-class standard of living and defeat the Tory Government.

In less than two months, a series of sporadic tenants' struggles has given place to a nationwide movement, which is beginning to unite all sections of the working people. This movement will extend and become more powerful. Its effect on the Government can be estimated from the remarks made by Mr. Sandys, the Minister of Housing, after only a few weeks of the movement's development.

The one thing lacking is a national united leadership. The Communist Party is the only national organisation which has put forward a clear and practical policy of keeping rents down and extending Council house building. It is the only organisation which has called on sections of the labour movement to take their part in the movement. The N.A.T.R. is giving valuable guidance and leadership to many Tenants' organisations. But the Labour Party, Co-operative Party and Trade Union leadership have hung back. The National Executive of the Labour Party have called a Housing Conference of representatives of Council Labour Groups on January 21 and 22, 1956. General housing policy will be discussed and some attention may be given to the current problems faced by the Councillors. It is not the intention of the Labour Party leadership to give a fighting lead to the Councillors and to the Labour Party as a whole to oppose the Government's measures. Many of the delegates, however, will demand a national campaign, and much can be done by the Local Labour Parties and trade union branches to strengthen this demand.

The united movement in the towns, factories and trade union organisations could change the attitude of the leadership and force them to carry out their responsibilities to the labour movement. Therefore, the next stage will be the extension of the movement, together with pressure on the leadership of the Labour Party, trade union and co-operative organisations for a national lead, co-ordinating the movement, defeating the Tory attacks, and striking a powerful blow against the Tory Government. The issues are clear. The movement is ready to fight both on behalf of the people's living standards and against this callous Tory Government. All communists, sincere socialists, active trade unionists and co-operators have a vital rôle to play in building and leading this great united movement.

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THE TRADE THAT BUTLER STOPS

JOHN EATON

NEARLY two years have now gone by since Churchill speaking of the embargo on export to Russia, said in the House of Commons (February 25, 1954): 'A substantial relaxation would undoubtedly be beneficial'. He pointed out that the embargo was imposed 'three or four years ago in circumstances which we can all feel were different from those which now prevail'. His speech suggested that in the future restriction should apply only to 'traffic in military equipment'. Two years have gone by but, in effect, nothing has been done to modify the embargo. On trade with China he said: 'We cannot relax restrictions . . . until a Korean or, perhaps, a wider Far Eastern peace has been established'. The peace has been established but nothing has been done about the embargo.

In October, 1954, a certain pretence was made at modifying the restrictions on trade with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. But this was mere pretence. Some items were removed from the export embargo list but control over the trade in the items that remained was very considerably tightened. To make this stricter control possible the publication of the embargo list was made necessary. For the first time the trade knew what they were not allowed to export. Hitherto they had had to play a kind of blind man's buff with the Board of Trade: they had to feel out by trial and error, by making specific applications for export licences, which commodities could or could not be exported. The Board of Trade in turn worked to the directives of the secret Co-ordinating Committee (COCOM) set up by the Americans in Paris and composed of the 'Marshall Aid countries'. The list of forbidden items runs to over ten columns of small print on a 12-inch page (see *Board of Trade Journal,* October 16, 1954). Embargoed items include a big range of machine tools, many types of compressors, pumps, diesel engines, etc., ball and roller bearings, many metals, many chemicals and so forth. This is a hundred miles removed from the embargo on 'traffic in military equipment' of which Churchill spoke. The guiding idea behind the compilers of this list was probably to put on it everything for which the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries were known to have requirements which—in terms of both quality and quantity—went beyond their own production. In short it was meant to be a list of the goods they need. It is said

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that bankers will lend money to anyone who can prove that he does not need it. The British and American imperialists are prepared to sell everything to the Soviet Union provided it can be proved that they don't need it. This is a fine basis for trade!

In the case of China the embargo is even more extreme and nothing has been done to change it. Apart from modifications of interpretation, some relaxations at the margin and—probably more—tightenings up, it stands as Sir Hartley Shawcross presented it to Parliament on June 19, 1951. There is wholesale exclusion of complete sections of the engineering and metal producing industries. For example, all internal combustion engines, all metal-working machine tools, all classes of iron and steel products up to and including the finished stage, all aluminium, all copper, all lead, all antimony and all tungsten (commodities of which China is a leading producer), all natural and synthetic rubber, a huge range of chemicals, etc., etc. (with antibiotics as a result of a vigorous Parliamentary campaign at last being allowed to go for the tending of the sick in China).

Whilst the Chancellor of the Exchequer is calling upon the workers to restrain their wage demands in order to make British goods competitive in world markets, the Government is throwing trade into the laps of Britain's competitors. Switzerland and Sweden, for example, are at this moment manufacturing large turbo-generators for export to China, whereas the British manufacturer is refused a licence for small generators for mobile cinemas.

Many millions of pounds worth of valuable export orders have been lost because of the embargo. For instance, a group of British businessmen who visited Peking in 1953 brought back with them several millions of pounds worth of export orders including contracts to the value of £5,750,000 which could not be executed because the Board of Trade refused to grant export licences. Among these embargoed orders were £1,750,000 worth of motor vehicles, £700,000 worth of cables, £1,200,000 worth of machine tools, £500,000 worth of scientific instruments. Despite the widespread unemployment in Wales during the tinplate crisis of 1953 the manufacturers were not allowed to accept an order for China valued at half a million pounds. Today, with the danger of standing off increasing at the Rover works, there is a restriction on the number of Land Rovers which can be exported to the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe and no exports at all are permitted to China.

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In February, 1954, Mr. Ivan Kabanov, Soviet Minister of Foreign Trade, made a statement in which he listed the goods which the Soviet Union wished to purchase from England over a period of three years. If our manufacturers had been allowed to supply all the items on this list, it would have meant some £200 millions worth of trade for Britain. Even now, on the Board of Trade's own confession, a quarter of the goods on the Kabanov list are still embargoed. The volume of trade lost by the operation of the embargo cannot be fully accounted for merely by adding together the various specific orders known to have been killed by the Board of Trade. The real losses would be many times larger for the purchasing bodies do not go on time after time trying to place orders in Britain and finding themselves frustrated. If you call week after week at your shoemaker and he keeps telling you that he can't sell you shoes but that he has a nice line in toffee apples, you will begin sooner or later to look elsewhere for your footwear. We cannot wonder if the commercial bodies of the Soviet Union, China and Eastern Europe, having been told so many times that British manufacturers are not allowed to supply this or that machinery but that we can offer some excellent fish, consider that they would be wasting their time to make enquiries for such machinery.

Today also there are strong forces motivated by economic considerations, favouring the development of East-West trade. Despite the political hostility and despite the official policies of the 'Western' governments, these forces are asserting themselves to an increasing degree. The main obstacle that they meet is the calculated policy of American imperialism. The embargo on trade with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe is part and parcel of the Marshall Plan policy. American 'aid' to Europe was designed to support capitalism and to stifle the development of socialism in Western Europe. At the same time the 'aid' tied Western Europe to American sources of supply and imposed heavy military programmes arising from the American alliance. However, in order to force the economic dependence of Western Europe on American imperialism, it was necessary to prevent these countries from obtaining economic freedom of action which expansion of the sources of supply and markets in the socialist world would have given them. At the same time the American capitalists were concerned to see that capitalism in Western Europe did not steal a march on them by getting in first on the potential markets of the socialist world.

To deprive other capitalist powers of the economic support and means to independence that trade with the socialist world could

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give, was only part of the American objective. The embargo was also a crucial element in the economic strategy of the cold war. If the trade embargoes were removed this would cause a marked relaxation in international tension—which would not suit the policy of the American reactionaries. Therefore, every possible excuse for clinging on to the embargoes has been seized on. And today, in reality, the British Government has only one pitiful argument for keeping the embargo, namely that they do not want to get out of step with their American allies. Nonetheless, despite all these obstacles trade has grown in recent years, but is still far short of what it ought to be.

Britain's position is considerably worse than the average. Whereas Britain's exports to the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe amounted to 0·9 per cent. of all our total exports in 1954 as against 0·6 per cent. in 1953, these figures compare with exports in 1937 accounting for 3·6 per cent. of our total exports. There is still room therefore for a four-fold increase merely to bring us back to the pre-war level. Moreover Britain, despite the importance of foreign trade to our economy, lags far behind other countries. In 1954 our exports to the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe (including re-exports) valued in dollars totalled 96 million as against Finland's $184 millions and West Germany's $183 millions. The increase in West Germany's exports to the socialist countries has been extremely rapid. The 1954 figure of $183 millions is more than double the 1952 figure, namely $85 millions. Moreover the relative advantage of West Germany in these markets continues to grow.

As is so often the case, the reactionaries are burying their heads in the sand. The embargo has done nothing to throttle the industrial development of the socialist countries. On the contrary it has forced them to speed up the development of their own industrial techniques and to learn how to rely less on the more advanced industries of the West. But this does not mean that we have lost opportunities of trade for good and all. It means that the trade between East and West will become different in character. No longer exclusively raw materials from the East for manufactured products from the West but raw materials and manufactured products flowing in each direction. In this trade our finest products can always find a place, from the engineering industry certainly, but, perhaps, to an increasing extent from the consumer goods industries also. Moreover, whether the imperialists like it or not the trade between the socialist world and India, Egypt, Indonesia,

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Ceylon, and many other 'under-developed countries' is growing and is going to grow further. This will speed the industrial development of these countries tremendously, since the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries will give them the capital equipment that they want on terms that they can willingly accept, whereas the guiding principle of 'aid' from the imperialist countries to the backward territories has up to now been maximum profit for the imperialist monopolies. The turn that events are taking will hurt the British finance oligarchy but for the British people it is an excellent thing. As industrialisation develops in these countries it will create greater opportunities for developing trade on the basis of equality and mutual advantage. It will be a blow to the whole policy of imperialism, to the policy of armaments and colonial wars that weighs so heavily upon the living standards of the British people.

FROM THE *LABOUR MONTHLY* OF 25 YEARS AGO

DISARMAMENT DEADLOCK

The significance of the 'Disarmament Preparatory Commission' has never been disarmament, but rather the opposite. Its successive meetings have marked successive stages in the growth of armaments, of strategic policy of the different Powers, of military alliances, of the armed camps. In this sense, it has been a barometer of the approach to war. At each sitting armaments have increased; the policy of even pretence of aims at 'disarmament' has shrunk. It was in 1927 that the first Soviet proposals for universal total disarmament were rejected by every imperialist power. That rejection, which is maintained today by every capitalist state and capitalist party, by the Labour Government in Britain, by the whole Second International, will remain in history as a landmark, will grow larger in men's memories, when the advance to war reaches its inevitable fruits, will constitute a lodestone to mark where the will to war has lain, with imperialism; and where the will to peace, with the working class. The second stage was marked by the second Soviet proposals for universal disarmament by definite, successive stages; this was equally rejected by all. The third important stage came at the last sitting with the third Soviet proposals that there should at any rate be agreed definite 'reduction' of armaments, in place of the familiar humbug of 'limitation' without reduction. These proposals were equally rejected.

From the Notes of the Month: *1931 and War*, by R.P.D., January, 1931.

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THE REAL AMERICANS

JOHN WILLIAMSON

SOME of the newspaper men in this country (and their more gullible readers) are in danger of making a serious mistake. The mistake is to assume that the attitude of Dulles and Macmillan at Geneva six weeks ago, their rigid refusal to negotiate, has the backing of the people of the United States. Even amongst those who support the Administration there are protesting voices. It was Walter Lippmann who first admitted that no capitalist statesman in his senses expected the Soviet Union to accept the United States-British proposals on Germany. Returning later to the same subject, Lippmann wrote:

> His (Dulles') terms ignored entirely the true spirit of Geneva which was that since nothing can now be settled by force, it is necessary to manœuvre and to bargain, and to trade. The Western terms at Geneva had in them no room for manœuvre, no material for bargaining.

As to the earlier Geneva, the conference of the Heads of Governments in July last, there was, of course, no room for doubt. The plain people of the United States were enthusiastic about the outcome of that July meeting. In that hot summer of last year, a group of Soviet farmers touring the wheat-growing plains of Minnesota, were presented by a group of women with a small gift—a traditional North American peace pipe, fashioned from native clay. The American people want no gap in the ranks advancing to peace. After the Geneva Conference, President Eisenhower received thousands of letters approving his actions there. The 'Letters from the People' columns of the daily papers reflected the spirit which greeted the relaxation of international tension.

The next step was the Foreign Ministers' conference of late October-November. On its eve 100 prominent and representative Americans (including E. T. Weir, president of the National Steel Corporation; banker James P. Warburg; president of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Mrs. Olmstead; eminent Negro educator and president of Moorhouse College, Dr. Benjamin Mays) wrote to President Eisenhower:

> We would profit from a realistic approach, free of the assumption that the Soviet leaders are always wrong and we are always right. Let us reaffirm the give and take spirit of Geneva so we may all live and let live.

This same letter gave a warning against the 'reversion to inflexible

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attitudes, characteristic of the pre-Geneva period', proposed that 'concrete steps be taken to open trade on the vast scale needed by all countries both East and West' and called for 'universal participation' in the United Nations through expanding its membership.

Within the labour movement, the rank and file rejoiced that the threat of war had been pushed into the background. But the top leaders of the American Federation of Labour sounded like the McCarthy crowd. A resolution of its Executive Council condemned Geneva, and its president, George Meany, stated 'It is a mistake to talk of the accomplishments at Geneva'. This, however, did not prevent other trade union leaders expressing the aspirations of the people. Walter Reuther, president of the Congress of Industrial Organisations, speaking in Paris, said that he 'welcomed the spirit of Geneva and hoped it would reduce international tension and war'. The weekly paper of the Railroad Brotherhoods quoted Macmillan's phrase 'there ain't gonna be any war' and wrote 'that pungent conclusion . . . summed up the big change in the world atmosphere caused by the Geneva Conference'. The Amalgamated Clothing Workers' Union paper wrote, 'the whole world is breathing easier since the Geneva Conference'. The Textile Union paper wrote that Geneva only became possible 'when Eisenhower junked the "dynamic new foreign policy" he and Dulles used to bleat about'. The convention of the Illinois Federation of Labour, which is the second largest of all state federations, commended Eisenhower for his efforts on behalf of peace at Geneva and urged continued negotiations 'on every possible level . . . in order to resolve the conflicts between East and West', and concluded that

> Labour-backed candidates should become the best exponents of a genuine policy of peace in order to bring about the political defeat of those now in Congress and the Administration who oppose continuous negotiations to ease world tensions.

These hopeful expressions of opinion were in strong contrast to the denunciations of Geneva by the 'War Now' crowd of Senators Knowland, McCarthy, Jenner and Admiral Radford; who were joined by New York's Governor Harriman—a Democratic presidential aspirant backed by the Catholic Church hierarchy and certain Wall Street circles—with his own brand of anti-Communist denunciations of Geneva.

United States imperialism played apparently contradictory roles at the two Geneva conferences. United States attendance at Geneva in July was contrary to its own declarations and actions during the

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preceding years and marked differences in the ranks of the ruling class. Basic agreement on the objectives of United States imperialism on a world scale remains, but with the defeat of American policies in Korea, Indo-China and Formosa, tactical differences sharpened. In February, 1955, that old hard-boiled reactionary militarist-turned-industrialist, General Douglas MacArthur (now chairman of the Board of Directors of the Remington-Rand Company), voiced the point of view that war, under the present relationship of political and military forces in the world, can no longer be an effective instrument of policy; a point of view which the *New York Times* emphasised when, writing about Soviet discussions of 'economic weaknesses', it warned that

> It would be a tragic fallacy to view these weaknesses through what the Soviets would call 'capitalist' eyes and to translate them into military weaknesses. That was one of Hitler's great mistakes.

MacArthur's position gained some support, and the great debate on foreign policy continued. Meanwhile important developments also occurred abroad and at home (the ceaseless and bold peace measures of the Socialist sector of the world; the Bandung Conference; the neutralist rôle of India, Indonesia, Yugoslavia; the resistance of the peoples of the world to the American policy of bullying the world; the growing peace sentiment and movement for banning H-bombs; the growing opposition of the governments in Britain, France and other allies to United States policies that threaten their own interests) that compelled Eisenhower's attendance at Geneva.

The issues of the July Geneva Conference will be in the centre of the 1956 presidential race. The illness of President Eisenhower has brought into the open many of the inner-party alignments and made the internal political situation more fluid. Among the Republican candidates, Vice-President Nixon is the most active. An unscrupulous politician, he will try to inherit the Eisenhower mantle; although Adlai Stevenson's description of him in 1952 as 'McCarthy with a white collar' is still a true picture. Despite his repeated assertions that he is not a candidate, a powerful Republican (if Eisenhower is out of the 1956 presidential picture) would be Chief Justice Warren.

Organised labour is reacting almost solidly against the new threat of Nixonism, but it has big and dangerous illusions regarding the Democratic Party. Certainly the major Democratic presidential aspirants present a miserable picture and one that cannot inspire confidence in the masses of the people who greeted Geneva. The

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titular head of the party, Adlai Stevenson, takes a hostile standpoint on Geneva and foreign policy. Senator Kefauver, whilst actively defending the trade union movement against the Administration attacks and trying to revive the anti-monopoly tradition of Roosevelt, on foreign policy is little better; while New York Governor Harriman actually criticises Stevenson for his 'moderation' in foreign policy and himself sneers at the 'hoax of Geneva'. Democratic Governor George Leader of Pennsylvania expressed much more nearly the spirit of Geneva when he said that the preservation of peace and freedom was the 'single great and overriding issue of our times' and that the issue of who can best lead the nation and the world into an era of peace 'may be the principal issue of the 1956 campaign'—but he is not considered in the race.

Despite all the obstacles that may be placed in the way of realising the directives of the four heads of governments on European security and Germany, disarmament, developments of contacts between East and West—the 'Summit' talks represent an historic turning point. Irrespective of the fate of individual statesmen, this new relationship of world forces, this new trend, with all the ups and downs, will grow and develop.

Washington won no victory at Geneva on the German question. The former chief of the finance division of the United States High Commission in Germany, Richard Leonard, commented recently that West Germany will remain in N.A.T.O. only so long as United States troops are stationed there and that a united Germany 'will almost surely be a neutral Germany'. And the following bluntly worded statement speaks for itself:

> Once West Germany is rearmed it is we, not the Russians, who will have the most pressing need to come to an understanding on the status of Germany and a European Security system. Our leaders apparently do not grasp this point . . . they do not even trouble to make out a decent case for themselves.
>
> (J. F. Golay, former head United States Secretariat of Allied High Commission.)

Then James Reston in the *New York Times* of November 15 writes:

> For the first time in months it is being said in the embassies of the United States allies that the United States has lost the gamble to arm and unite Germany with N.A.T.O. . . . The armament of West Germany and negotiation of military agreements . . . were Mr. Dulles' answer to the . . . Soviets. All these policies are now showing signs of weakness.

If from three thousand miles away it seems contradictory and illogical to have so many divergent speeches from various supposedly

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authoritative sources, from within the Administration itself, and from within both Republican and Democratic parties, that is because: (*a*) the representatives of the different ruling class tactical tendencies in foreign policy are found not only inside each major party, but inside the Administration itself; and (*b*) because the final die of U.S. foreign policy has not yet been cast. The National Committee of the Communist Party of the United States was, therefore, absolutely correct when it said:

> Geneva marks the beginning of the end of the cold war. But these potentialities will be realised only through the struggle of the people of all countries. . . . On the American people, and in the first place on the organised workers, falls the responsibility for assuring that the seed planted at Geneva will flower and bear fruit.

Until the last few months there was no organised peace movement of any strength and breadth in the U.S.A. One of the main objectives of the political persecutions of the past seven years, which in 1948 struck first against the American Communists, was the prevention of a broad peace movement. During these years the American people have desired peace, but have not recognised the consequences of the aggressive and war-like attitudes and activities of their own government. Then too, this desire for peace had certain narrow, selfish and sometimes backward reasons attached to it. They didn't want American boys killed on battle-fields thousands of miles away from home, although they didn't protest at others doing the fighting for U.S. imperialism. They objected during the Korean War that over 90 per cent. of the United Nations troops were of the American Army. They became terrified when it became known that the United States had no monopoly in H-bomb warfare and that if used by the United States there could be retaliation. It would be wrong not to recognise these facts. These widespread peace sentiments, although having a powerful influence at critical moments, were not organised into a strong national peace movement.

During the last half-year, an organised peace movement of considerable breadth is coming into existence. It is still largely pacifist and bourgeois-liberal in leadership, being based primarily on church congregations, women's organisations and farming communities. Only rarely do labour influences come into the picture. With the merging of sixteen million trade unionists into one federation in December, the spokesmen for peace within the ranks of labour will have to push forward boldly to maintain and follow up their first steps in face of the dictatorial leadership which Meany and Co. will strive to impose on the united federation.

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As long as the developing peace movement in the United States remains unclear and without firm and conscious labour influence, it will be an elastic and somewhat nebulous factor in helping to shape government policy. In the coming months it should be possible to move ever broader sections of the labour and people's movement into more active opposition to the 'Cadillac Cabinet' and its policies, along the lines of independent and united political action on the key issues of peace, civil liberties, economic security and Negro rights. The involvement of labour, adoption of a clear-cut principled stand on basic questions, and the working out in practice of a fighting policy are the needs of the hour in the peace movement in the United States.

WESTERN VALUES

SANCHO PANZA

IN SEARCH OF IDEAS AND IDEALS

The natural intellectual services which watered, warmed and illuminated Western society no longer fulfil their function.

—Peregrine Worsthorne, *Daily Telegraph*.

THERE is general agreement in the 'Free World' that 'anti-communism' isn't good enough—'we must begin to talk to the world in terms of what we are for rather than what we are against' (Adlai Stevenson). Mr. Dulles already in 1948 was convinced that Communism must be fought 'with creative ideas and lofty ideals' and not by 'striking a military posture'. General Gruenther, the Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, warned us recently that 'unless we solve this problem of politics and psychology, we are not going to survive this period of cold war'. He spoke of the experiences of his son in Korea, that in spite of all the support a rich country could give him, his son had found that his opponents because of their dedication to their cause were prepared 'to accept losses six or seven times as heavy as our own. We have religion, a sense of freedom, and of human dignity—everything we should be ready to fight for—and I believe our problem is to get the 400 million people of the N.A.T.O. countries to achieve this dedication'.

There is, accordingly, also general agreement that creative ideas and lofty ideals must be found, and that Western values, whatever they are, must be preserved or revalued and somehow made avail-

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able to the common man, who is doing the work and has to fight for the Western World. A whole army of mass communication experts, public-relation experts, sociologists, psychologists, religious leaders, advertisers, etc., are ready to condition the public mind. But, alas, the élite of the Western World, the representatives of the Western civilisation, the 'men of light and leading' (Lippmann), the learned, the 'guardians of truth and integrity' on both sides of the Atlantic, whose job it is to provide ideas and ideals, have sadly let down the Western statesmen and military men by failing to provide them with suitable ammunition. I do not blame them. It is a formidable task to reconcile the realities of the Western Way of Life and its spiritual products, such as idolatry of wealth, greed and selfseeking, with lofty ideas and ideals. It is much easier to be simply an anti-communist. You are not expected to know what communism is provided your vocabulary of invective is rich enough and you have a capacity for verbal innuendos and distortions.

Instead of manfully tackling the problem, the disillusioned and frustrated Western élite have again produced one of their periodic and ineffectual choruses of lament about the state of health of Western civilisation. This time most of the lamentations come from America, the modern bastion and leader of Western civilisation. 'Alarming symptoms of decline have appeared'; 'the Western man is profoundly sick'; 'the springs of the spiritual and intellectual life have dried up'; 'the power of the West is undermined by failure of belief'; 'the loss of a sense of purpose'; 'the belief in man has declined'; 'the soul of the contemporary man is a house divided against itself'; 'a deep confusion, a loss of direction in the political and social mind' (Lippmann); 'a deep-rooted sickness of mind and will, a psychic cancer which is affecting the vitality of our Western civilisation' (Sir David Kelly); 'the danger to our civilisations today comes from within, from the weakening of its vision. As vision is lost it becomes increasingly difficult for any political leader to prevail on the people to accept material sacrifices' (Louis J. Halle). This lament, nevertheless, does not mean that all the 'men of light and leading' have given up their task. On the contrary, many of them have taken the admonitions of the statesmen and military men very much to heart, and some of them, like Mr. Lippmann, have taken the bull by the horns, as we shall see later.

This business of providing good ideas and ideals is admittedly rather ticklish, because the respectable ideas and ideals of the Western World died on the battlefields of the First World War.

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The gruesome task of digging them up or resurrecting them was not much to the liking of the new Western élite. But the new ideas and ideals of the modern Western élite, such as Freudianism, sex, birth control, belief in personal relationships, were not very elevating and inspiring or suitable for mass consumption. Nevertheless, more suitable people among the élite were found, who unflinchingly, nay, even with relish devoted themselves to the task of digging up old values like religion, individual freedom and past glories on which they fed themselves and tried to feed the people. This archæological process continues unabated to the present day, as seen in the amount of time given to the disinterred Western values by the B.B.C. and the amount of space they occupy in newspapers, magazines and books.

The world is not lacking in good new ideas and ideals, but these have been found most unsuitable and upsetting for the 'Free World'. Some of the élite would like to be considered progressive, and have got hold of some of the good new ideas, but their problem is to know at what point to stop thinking and how to make use of the ideas and still be comfortable and safe.

ARISTOCRATIC UTOPIA

Civilisation, under any form of government, however popular, is always in a sense aristocratic.—*The Times.*

The cause of the 'erosion of the Western World' has been clear to the more thoughtful of the élite since Mr. T. S. Eliot saw his *Wasteland,* and never more than today. It is the common man. By a fluke of destiny the modern élite has been placed in the midst of what they call 'the age of the common man'. They feel most uncomfortable in it. They shudder at the unspeakable vulgarities of the 'century of the common man'. Their privileged position is threatened by the increase in the number of the élite and the prospect of all mankind becoming élite.

The West has declined, states Mr. Lippmann firmly, 'under the misrule of the people'. The masses of people are unfit to govern and unfit to have excessive freedom. Democracy has got out of hand. By demanding Paradise on Earth the common man 'has separated himself from the higher spiritual values'. By pandering to the common man with the Welfare State, New Deals, extension of democracy, etc., the Western World has brought the malady of its civilisation onto itself. Some of the élite have even begun to doubt the advantages of technical advance and efficiency because of the 'anti-intellectual quality of so much contemporary activity'.

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As the malady is diagnosed, Mr. Lippmann asks: 'can we develop a positive doctrine of the good society under modern conditions?' For inspiration he has travelled far back in time, as many of the élite have done before him, to the good society before the Industrial Revolution. There is no room any more for the old liberal basis of Western civilisation with its optimistic outlook and 'pernicious' promise of a Paradise on Earth. Mr. Lippmann suggests a compromise between the Christian conceptions of 'This World' and 'Other World', and finds a compromise in the conception of private property. In the new 'good society' the people will know their place; the property owners will not only have their rights, but duties; spiritual values will replace material values, and the leadership of it all will be in the hands of 'men of light and leading'. But, as *The Times* once said, 'if it is for the many as well as for the few to defend civilisation or "the Western way of life", then they must not only believe in it but be able to give a reason for the faith'. There is the rub. This new philosophy is so deep, as Mr. Lippmann claims, that its concepts and principles cannot be 'imagined in visual and tangible terms'. They have their being 'in the realm of immaterial entities' and can only be understood by a chosen few. How then communicate this vision to common sense? The way out is simple: 'the principles of the good society must be unpopular until they have prevailed sufficiently to alter the popular impulses'.

I am afraid that the Catholic Church has already some time ago stolen the thunder from Mr. Lippmann's Aristocratic Utopia. The compromise between 'This World' and 'Other World', as well as the compromise on private property, have formed the substance of the social and economic doctrine of the Catholic Church in Europe for quite a long time. And the Catholic Church also shares the dislike of liberal democracy. Recently Sir David Kelly, a former Ambassador to the Soviet Union and a fellow searcher of Mr. Lippmann's for creative ideas and lofty ideals, has put forward a rather similar set of ideas, like the substitution of spiritual values for material values, 'the ardent leadership of the intelligent few' and the condemnation of the acceptance of mass opinion as the controlling force in home and foreign affairs. The modern French élite isn't far behind with their philosophy of reanimation of old traditions, and resurrection of aristocratic values 'against the technical frenzy of the modern world'.

(Next month Sancho Panza will deal with 'European Civilisation', 'Specific British Western Values' and 'Export Trade in Western Values'.)

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BLOODLESS

WILLIAM GALLACHER

MY old pal Mannie Shinwell (never rated as over-modest in estimating his own outstanding ability) has written a book.* In a recent letter he says I ('his one sure pal' as he once called me) had a lot to do with his writing it. Not this book, Mannie! I wanted him to write a bit of working-class history; this is something entirely different. In this book he makes it very clear that he was the man who won the war and who foresaw what was required to win the peace, and who took the necessary measures to secure victory on this front as well. His colleagues don't come into the picture at all. Right at the start he says: 'So here it is, accurate in its details, but I regret to say, incomplete'.

'Incomplete' it is. There's a lot lacking; but 'accurate in its details'? Well, let us have a look. On page 60 we are told:

> In the New Year (1919, W.G.) the West of Scotland was driven to plans for a general strike to begin on 27th January. George Kerr, a trade union organiser and Glasgow Town councillor, presided over a meeting of shop stewards and trade union delegates which issued a call for action.

That's the first time I've read or heard of 'Wee' Geordie Kerr being associated with the shop stewards movement. Never. I don't know if 'Wee' Geordie was still alive at that time. He certainly wasn't active.

The Clyde Workers' Committee organised the strike. It was clear there was going to be a terrific response. The District Committee of the Amalgamated Engineering Union decided to throw in its weight with the unofficial movement. Then on the Saturday before the strike at our shop stewards meeting where I was in the chair, a delegation from the Glasgow Trades Council came and asked to be allowed to participate in the strike. We readily agreed to accept them though they came without invitation. A sub-committee was appointed to supervise strike organisation. Mannie was elected chairman while I was appointed organiser of all strike activities.

We had a great march, on the first Wednesday of the strike, through the streets of Glasgow ending up in George's Square, where the City Chambers are situated. Shinwell proposed that a deputation go in to see the Lord Provost. He, Kirkwood, Hopkins and several others went in and left me to address the strikers from the plinth on the Gladstone monument. When the deputation came out

Conflict without Malice, by Emanuel Shinwell, Odhams, 21s.

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we were informed that we had to return on Friday. Back to the Square on Friday. The deputation had gone into the Chambers while I held the fort from the same stance. The police were massed in front of the City Chambers and behind the strikers. All of a sudden a signal was given and the police made a savage onslaught on the strikers from the rear and drove them away across the Square. Now Mannie says on pages 62 and 63:

> I rushed down in the hope of calming the crowd, but when I got to the door of the City Chambers, the people had been driven back by the police. Men and women were scattering in all directions, many falling under the merciless attacks of the frenzied police. I saw Gallacher standing holding his head.

No, Mannie, you did not. When I jumped down off the plinth I got into a scrap with several police. I got laid out flat. I've told elsewhere how Neil Alexander threw himself over me and saved my face being smashed with a baton. Anyhow, I was pulled to my feet by two policemen each of whom had an arm, and was half-marched and half-dragged across the Square. Nobody saw me 'standing holding my head'. As, with my captors, I approached the City Chambers, I saw Kirkwood, who had run out to the middle of the street, being struck down by a police sergeant, but I didn't see Mannie.

On pages 78 and 79 he has a word or two to say about Wheatley:

> Wheatley was always regarded as an extreme Left-winger, but when he was leader of the Labour Group on the Glasgow Town Council he wanted to expel me. I was, in his view, too far to the Left.

What a whopper. True Wheatley didn't like Shinwell, not because he was 'too far to the Left' but for quite other reasons. He didn't trust him. He maintained that his sharp glibness was not sustained by a worthwhile belief in Socialism. I had many an argument with Wheatley on this because I was a friend of Wheatley and a friend of Mannie. I got the feeling that there was something of the anti-Semitic about Wheatley's attitude to Shinwell and this drew me closer to Mannie. I was at his service whenever he wanted me. When he was with the Seamen there were difficult times, but he could rely on me to do a turn at James Watt Street. I was a regular caller at his office and gave him all the help and encouragement that I had available.

Well, anyway, Mannie got himself elected to Parliament in 1922. He tells us he was one of the 'Wild Men of the Clyde'. Not accurate. The 'wild men' were those who composed the group led by Wheatley. Mannie was never one of them. But he went down

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in the train with the general body of Scottish Labour Members for the opening of Parliament and here is a paragraph that ends up absolutely accurate:

> There was no sleep for us that night. We talked and planned. Much of it was over old ground, but there was a greater sense of urgency. Of one thing we were all convinced. The seventeen of us who represented Socialism in Scotland would maintain the closest unity (note that, W.G.) irrespective of anything the Labour Party might do. With all the efficiency of new brooms we intended to make instant and great changes. We were bloodless revolutionaries, but revolutionaries for all that.

The correct medical term is 'anæmic' revolutionaries, and that's what they proved to be.

Then there is the story of the first Labour Government and a long panegyric about Macdonald, mostly trash. In 1929 Macdonald was vicious against Maxton, who had been of so much use to him in earlier years. He wrote two letters to Shinwell asking him to stand against Maxton for chairmanship of the I.L.P. Here is an excerpt from one (page 103):

> If Maxton stands it will be scandalous after what has happened but there is no lack of pure artfulness in him. He loves to be a figure in the press and is affording them fine chances of using him to the detriment of the movement. In the Aberdeen Tory paper there is something every day about him, and the point always is that he is a great and important figure and influence in the party. Vanity, unsupported by a capacity for work is at the root of the trouble they give.

It seems unlikely that Macdonald would ever have written such a letter to Shinwell had he not felt that he could use him against his Glasgow colleagues. So much for the decision to 'maintain the closest unity irrespective of anything the Labour Party might do'. Shinwell says on page 113, 'To dismiss Macdonald as a traitor to Labour is nonsense'. But he was a traitor to Labour and a traitor to every individual, like Maxton or Morel, who put their trust in him. But Mannie was always careful never to put his trust in anyone. For him there are the few clever fellows with 'personality' and then there are a whole lot of nondescripts.

But that is not important. What is important is that he, if we accept his word, scotched several conspiracies directed against Attlee. Yet he tells us that Churchill wanted him into his Government 'but that some of my Labour colleagues had demurred' and from what follows, Attlee was apparently one of them (page 156). This, however, did not deter him from saving the country as we find on the following page:

> I formed two objectives which I believed my privilege as an M.P. and my duty as a citizen made needful.

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The first was to press the Government to wage war with all the vigour the nation demanded and to use the full resources of the country. The problem of achieving this really simple end was one reason for my activities.

So when he discovered at the end of the European war that the leaders of the Labour Party were contemplating, with Churchill, a joint appeal to the country, he got really on the job in the days leading up to the 1945 Labour Party conference. 'On the Saturday night, when the conference delegates were arriving', he tells us on page 169:

I met Nye Bevan. We had both heard rumours about a recommendation for a joint appeal to the country. We found that we were of one accord: Labour in our opinion could win an election on its own.

Later we sought out Herbert Morrison, whose attitude was unknown to us. My impression was that he had a fairly open mind about the problem, but we convinced him that our chances were good and our duty to the party was certain.

Attlee and Bevin appear to have been the advocates of retaining the Coalition under Churchill, which would have been fatal for the Labour Party. But Mannie still insisted that Attlee was the man to lead the party to victory at the polls. He recalled a meeting held in Workington, Cumberland, during the war,

. . . when Attlee gave a factual but not very exciting address. I followed him. My first words were: 'We have just heard the speech of an honest man'.

'Brutus was an honourable man.'

During our life in the movement, if things were going bad with him, he always had 'my shoulder to cry on'. When things were going well with him we only had a nodding acquaintance. This relationship carried on until he went to the War Office. From then on I had no dealings with him. He had a host of new friends and V.I.P.s as his associates. That part of the book I don't feel like touching. But I am sure if the world should turn its favours from his face, if those who now seem his friends should turn and rend him, he'll let out a yell for his pal of bygone days and sure as faith I'll answer it. He is one amazing fellow, is Mannie, but he has written a rotten book.

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Book Review

THEORIES OF 'CONSTRUCTIVE' IMPERIALISM

The African Awakening, by Basil Davidson. (262 pp. Cape. *12s. 6d.*)

BASIL DAVIDSON has added to his valuable previous work in reporting conditions in Africa, made available in his earlier *Report on Southern Africa*, by this study of the lesser-known Belgian Congo and Portugese Angola. The same gifts of acute first-hand observation and vivid presentation, together with sympathy for African aspirations and sharp criticism of colonialism, are demonstrated in this volume. A powerful exposure of the workings of imperialism in Africa briefly reminds the reader of the grim record of the slave trade which murdered untold millions of Africans and disorganised the ancient civilisation of African society. From Angola alone 1,389,000 slaves were taken between 1486 and 1641. Lord Dartmouth, Colonial Secretary in 1775, resisted any check on the slave trade on the grounds that 'we cannot allow the Colonies to check or discourage in any degree a traffic so beneficial to the nation'. During the second half of the 18th century, Liverpool monopolised five-eighths of the British slave trade and three-sevenths of the total slave trade of the world. Equally he shows how after the slave trade the régime of King Leopold in the Congo 'possibly killed off more Africans in a decade than the slave trade had succeeded in doing throughout the whole of the previous century'. No less effectively he exposes the 'conventional European fable that "Africa is poor" ' by showing that 'Europe has found it possible to extract large profits with one hand, and yet gesture sadly at African poverty with the other'. He correctly concludes that Africa is ' "poor" because the colonial system makes it so and keeps it so'.

In the Belgian Congo he describes the boom conditions since the war, centred around the Union Minière. Oddly enough, he does not mention the rôle of uranium and the rain of dollars from the American atom gangsters in the development of this boom, which he appears to ascribe entirely to a new enlightened policy of industrial development. He shows how the partial measure of industrial expansion accompanying this boom has increased the number of industrial wage earners from 750,000 in 1948 to 1,200,000 in 1954. The standard of wages is 'generally low'; in a given district examined 'most workers were receiving a wage which the Government recognised as being inadequate to support a minimum standard of living'; 'the majority of unskilled workers have suffered a steady fall in real income'. The Union Minière in the single year 1951 exported profits (not counting additions to reserves and re-investment) amounting to 2,560 million francs or £18 million. Trade unions are forbidden; there are no political rights; 'negligent workers' are sentenced in their thousands every year to prison with hard labour; in 1952 there were 3,818 political prisoners. This disposes of the myth of the supposed absence of unrest in the Belgian Congo. He records the little known facts of the revolt of 1943 in the eastern Congo, when 73 rebels were sentenced to death.

In Portugese Angola he gives damning evidence of the continuance of an officially imposed system of slavery, with '379,000 *Contradados* or forced workers who are really slaves'. Here also he found a 'steady flow of political prisoners'; and he gives some account of the rising in Sao Thomé in 1953; 'news

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of this bloody event failed to reach the outside world'.

Alongside this valuable reporting and exposure of imperialism, Basil Davidson embarks on some general theories of African development which are more open to question. Despite his criticism of the colonial system, his suggestions for a theoretical analysis of African problems tend to present an objective justification of imperialism as an historically necessary and salutary process awakening a stagnant Africa and preparing the way for a period of 'constructive' development and African advance under the guidance of more enlightened imperialist rulers, as shown in the Gold Coast and Nigeria. This theory, which is remarkably close, whatever the intentions of the author, to current Liberal and Labour imperialist propaganda, begins from the picture of a stagnant Africa which remained in the Stone Age, with unprogressive 'tribal' institutions, until the arrival of the Europeans in 1482 brought the beginnings of change to draw Africa, however painful the process, into the modern world. 'There remains the central point of African stagnation.' 'Their social evolution slowed up, came almost to a stop.' 'Their real misfortune lay in their moving away from the cradles of early civilisation.' 'Cut off from the future, they advanced into the past.'

In a brief review it would be impossible to examine adequately the questions here raised. But there is reason to judge that modern archæological research, which is only beginning work in the vast African field, is throwing increasing doubts on the conventional picture of 'Darkest Africa' before the imperialist conquest. Davidson admits that his theories are presented 'in default of exact evidence' (p. 39). He records the development, not only of a high technique of agriculture, and of pottery and weaving, but also of mining and working of copper, gold and iron, but finds it was not 'a genuine bronze age and iron age'. He describes the development of 'a high degree of centralised authority' and a 'legal system' which 'in some respects had advanced to the stage reached in Europe during the early mediæval period'. He records the existence of 'stable empires built between A.D. 900 and 1600 circling the southern fringe of the western Sahara', but finds them 'not typical of tribal Africa'. The evidence is throughout somewhat forcefully adapted to the theory of the incapacity of social development of the African peoples until the European conquest came to save them.

From this follows the conception of the historical justification of the imperialist conquest. 'African isolation south of the Sahara could have continued to mean stagnation and near stagnation. The supplying of this revolutionary stimulus may be the only moral and material justification for colonial conquest; but it is a real one.' Hence he sees 'the usefully destructive period of European contact' fulfilling an 'unlovely but necessary mission'.

The second or modern stage is seen as a 'constructive' period following on the 'destructive' period. Modern imperialism brings the development of the industrial working class, emerging from the old tribal conditions, and thereby inevitably creating the conditions for economic, social and political advance.

> There are signs here and there of this destructive period of European contact being followed by a constructive period . . . one need only reflect on the significance for Africans of the measure of self-

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> government which they have won in the Gold Coast, Nigeria and French West Africa (p. 238).

This 'constructive' period is seen as arising, not from the victory of national liberation ending imperialism, but within the conditions of imperialism:

> No doubt a realist judgment would say that colonialism does not willingly liquidate itself, and that the African civilisation of tomorrow will *in fact* emerge under a modified colonialism (p. 239).

The rôle of the African liberation struggle is seen as a stimulus, but not as decisive:

> Even if one imagines the African peoples as politically inert, which they are not, one can say that a constructive period of contact will none the less gradually supplant the destructive period (p. 245).

On this theory of a 'constructive' period of imperialism, arising within the framework of imperialism, without the overthrow of imperialist domination, and before the victory of the national liberation struggle, it is only possible to express sharp disagreement. Such a theory not only runs counter to the experience of modern imperialism, and of every nation which has won independence from imperialism, only by mass struggle against imperialism, and never by the acceptance of gradual evolution within its framework. It also runs counter to the reality of African conditions which he himself so sharply exposes. When he cites the Gold Coast as a model of the advance to 'a measure of self-government', his own previous record reveals how 'for the Gold Coast mining industry in 1949 a reliable official source calculates that "of the £6·4 million earned by the exports of gold, perhaps £3 million can be considered to have been transferred out of the country".' The full measure of imperialist exploitation continues in the Gold Coast and in Nigeria, and is even intensified alongside the conditions of the advance to a 'measure of self-government'. Acceptance of the theory of 'constructive' imperialism would disarm the national liberation movement and prolong the life of imperialism.

The special form of this reformist or evolutionary theory of imperialism evolved by Basil Davidson turns on a species of economism, which virtually ignores the development of the African nations, leaves out of account the significance of the development of the African national bourgeoisie, or of the struggles of the peasantry, to concentrate only on the emergence of the industrial working class in Africa as the harbinger of the future new order. No Marxist would wish to under-estimate the ultimately decisive significance of the rôle of the industrial working class in a colonial country, or the vital importance of the advance to the hegemony of the working class and its Communist Party in the united national front. But to jump at one bound from imperialism to the working class in a colonial country as its successor, is to miss the essential character of the national liberation struggle which is the decisive task of the present phase in all colonial and dependent countries.

Precisely because Basil Davidson has endeavoured to use some of the methods of Marxism in his economic analysis, it is the more necessary to criticise frankly the theoretical and political inadequacies which mar an otherwise valuable work of record and exposure. The tendency here revealed bears a certain analogy to the old 'legal Marxism' in pre-war Russia, which became so obsessed with emphasising the objective neces-

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sity of capitalism and its historical rôle, even while paying lip-service to the future rôle of the working class to replace it, as to end up in the camp of liberal capitalism. In the same way, the tendency to emphasise the positive historical rôle of imperialism, and even to present it as a progressive force moving into a 'constructive' phase, despite accompanying references to the auxiliary rôle of African awakening, the national movement and the working class as a stimulus to development, can only be judged to end up very close, whatever the intentions of the author, to the theories of liberal imperialism.

R.P.D.

Communication

WILLIAM MORRIS SOCIETY

The following letter which appeared in The Times *on September 13, 1955, will be of interest to many readers of* Labour Monthly:

To the Editor of The Times

Sir,—While there are many who admire William Morris for one or another reason and there are such excellent societies as the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, the Kelmscott Fellowship, the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, and the Art Workers Guild, which, originally inspired by him, carry on much of his teaching on some particular aspect, there exists no society whose aim it is to extend the knowledge of the man as painter, embroiderer, weaver, carver, calligrapher, wood engraver, printer, writer, and socialist.

Simultaneously, personal knowledge of his many-sided character has faded with the passage of time and the very breadth and diversity of his work and interests has hindered the comprehensive appreciation of his outlook as a whole and of his contribution to art, crafts, literature, and social and political thought.

For these reasons a 'William Morris Society' was founded at a commemorative gathering at Red House, Morris's home at Bexley Heath. The society aims to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas on his contemporary influence over the whole range of his artistic and political activities; to spread the knowledge of his work among a wider audience, and to sponsor publications illustrating the work of Morris and his circle.

Our project has the blessing of Sir Sydney Cockerell, who is, we believe, the only surviving member of Morris's intimate circle. We invite those who believe with us that Morris's life and teachings have value to Britain and the world today to address themselves to the honorary secretary, Mr. Graeme Shankland.

Yours faithfully,

J. BRANDON-JONES,
NIKOLAUS PEVSNER,
STANLEY MORISON.

Red House,
Red House Lane,
Bexley Heath, Kent.

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the engineer who uses his locker as a lending library, keeping L.M. well to the fore. (7) *Specimen copies.* Yet another way L.M. can be displayed is the use of our Free Specimen Copy scheme (see back cover)—and don't forget the Midget!

What is, I think, so striking about this handful of examples, is firstly that there seems to be nobody without any means of reaching out to new readers—not even the shamefully ill-treated pensioner. Secondly, if you find ways of showing it to people—and not least the young—they will welcome it. If you can't *sell* a copy, at least see it is *read.*

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Let us turn to greet all our overseas readers in the person of these three friends. To *the American woman* who has 'been in the fight for Socialism since 1900', and values L.M. so much that she doesn't 'want to lose a single issue': she is 90. To *the young soldier in Cyprus,* seeing for himself the ugly face of imperialism at work, finding the answers to the troubled questions he has begun to ask. To a reader in what must be an *Unnamed Country,* where repression imposes severest penalties on anyone even possessing a copy; yet somehow he gets it all the same and shares it 'with six other people'. To all, from all: Peace and Prosperity in 1956.

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